



Meteor



Heraut

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Around USAG Benelux

USAG Schinnen



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Coming soon

Electricians work diligently on the new Bookmark to prepare for the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony Saturday at U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen. The Bookmark will provide a relaxing atmosphere for authorized Army and Air Force Exchange Service customers to buy books and drink coffee or cappuccino.

Benelux

Overseas Housing Allowance Survey

The Overseas Housing Allowance Survey for Belgium, Luxembourg and The Netherlands ends March 2.

The survey, administered by the per diem, travel and transportation allowance committee, collects data used to measure recurring utility and maintenance expenses incurred by service members stationed overseas who reside in private housing and receive OHA.

The data collected is used to determine the amount service members will receive for their overseas housing allowance.

Service members can complete the survey at <https://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oha/ohasurvey>. The survey requires input from actual utility expenses for the past 12-month period.

Estimated time required to complete the survey is normally 30 to 40 minutes.

Benelux's back guarded by LPC

By J.D. Hardesty

The first Local Processing Center to open in Europe guards the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux's back against data loss.

The 39th Signal Battalion, in coordination with the Benelux community, began consolidating email and file servers within the new center located on Caserne Daumerie, Chièvres, Belgium.

The center, the first of four scheduled local processing centers to support Army knowledge management across Europe, is co-located with the new Network Service Center and provides "real time" back-up capabilities locally.

The processing center "is configured and prepared to begin user customer data migration," said Lt. Col. Thomas J. Mahoney, commander of the 39th Signal Battalion. "The four centers enables us to recover users data should one of the systems go down."

The 39th provides communication support to USAG Benelux and its three subordinate garrisons and units in England.

As part of the user migration, information technology doesn't need to be centralized to be updated and file servers are



PHOTO: Courtesy 39th Signal Battalion

Erick Thek, (left) a system administrator of the Local Processing Center in the Network Service Center on Caserne Daumerie, Chièvres, Belgium, briefs Brig. Gen. John Adams, (right) deputy U.S. Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee and community coordinator for the Brussels Military Community as members of the 39th Sig. Bn. support team stand by.

not need to be consolidated.

"We are moving Task Force Enterprise in the direction U.S. Army, Europe wants it to go," Mahoney said.

The center, housed in building 8 on Daumerie, took a year to complete with the USAG Benelux Directorate of Public Works overseeing infrastructure build-out and 5th Signal Command providing project management.

"Our people (Benelux-wide) will be the first to migrate servers, email, files and other data," Mahoney said.

With an array of data backup currently on tape, compact disks and

hard drives, the new processing center will provide "near real time replication" and eliminate the need for constant data backup through the battalion's area of operation because the system provides automatic backup every four minutes.

Other local processing facilities will be on-line soon in Kaiserslautern and Grafenwoehr, Germany.

"Replications here will also be made at the other centers once on-line so replicative data will never be lost," he said. "The process will be

seamless and users will be able to continue to operate if the system goes down."

The entire Benelux fiber optic infrastructure was upgraded in 2004 for all four communities with new fiber optics installed between buildings and the Global Information Grid (similar to power grids in the energy industry).

"With the modernization, our civilian workforce will retain the data knowledge over time," he said. "Though experience always leaves, we now have the technology to consolidate how we do business with 'share point services' providing collaboration and web-based solutions.

PHOTO: Cis Spook

A U.S. Army Garrison Benelux joint-service color guard pays tribute to the 10 crew members of the B-17 "Susan Ruth" near the plane's Feb. 8, 1944 crash site at Macquenoise, Belgium. The Belgian American Foundation holds an annual memorial service to honor the allies who helped to liberate Belgium against the Nazis. Two "Susan Ruth" crew members died in the crash, three escaped but were caught and shot by enemy forces, four were taken prisoner and sent to the German stalags and one, the pilot, escaped and fought with a resistance group until the area was liberated Sept. 2, 1944. "We should never forget what they have done during the liberation process of our country," stated Dr. Paul Delahaye, chairman of the Belgian American Foundation at the wreath-laying ceremony near the "Susan Ruth" memorial. Another ceremony held at Monceau-Imbrechies, Belgium honors the first 12 GIs to die on Belgian soil during World War II.





Col. Dean A. Nowowiejski
USAG Benelux Commander

This edition of the Notes is designed to bring you up to date on some significant events taking place in our communities right now. We will cover 3 focus areas: **American Forces Action Plan (AFAP)**, the **new postal services** at Chièvres, and the **Overseas Housing Utility Survey**. They are all good news.

Nowowiejski Notes

First, we are now active in the annual AFAP season. If you want to know more about AFAP, go to our web page, www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil and click on the link at the right, **My Army Life Too**, under useful links. When you are there, click on **Getting Involved** at the left, and there is a page of information about this service wide program under a subordinate **AFAP link**.

Since the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux serves joint communities, we invite you to submit your good ideas about how your life can be improved through the AFAP process.

Local issues are collected and forward to United States Army in Europe, and then to Department of the Army. Each year, many local ideas make worldwide changes, and many suggested improvements are implemented.

The Schinnen and Chièvres communities will have concluded their local

conferences by the time this paper is released, but the Brussels conference is still to come on March 14 and 15, as well as the Chievres Teen Forum on March 7.

You can still participate by volunteering for the USAREUR and DA AFAP conferences, and by volunteering to support this year's remaining and next year's local conferences.

AFAP is a great place to submit ideas for improvement in the community and then watch your idea grow. If you want a presentation on AFAP or information sheets on working issues, please check the link described above.

One-Stop Mail Service Offered

Community Mail Room 490 next door to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) Main Exchange at Chièvres is now open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for purchasing stamps, money orders, or for mailing letters and pack-

ages. Thanks to our postal service team and the acting director of human support services, USAG Benelux, for making this possible. Please support this new opportunity by participating. It is designed for customer ease to have a one-stop shop at Chièvres.

March 2 OHA Deadline

The Overseas Housing Allowance Utility Survey is being conducted from now through 2 March in Belgium and Germany. The survey is available to all service members living in privately leased quarters and drawing OHA. We were one of the few communities not to suffer a decrease in COLA recently because of your active participation in a previous similar survey.

With the dollar to euro conversion cost, and rising costs of energy, you want to maintain an accurate and full housing allowance. If you don't vote, your housing allowance may not be sufficient for your utility needs.

Please take the half hour it takes to complete this survey. There is an OHA Utility Survey link on the USAG Benelux web page listed above.

Productivity improvement leads to savings

By J.D. Hardesty

U.S. Army Garrison Benelux saved more than \$400,000 during fiscal year 2005 all through the imagination of its workforce.

Overall, employees submitted 36 initiatives under the Productivity Improvement Review program with projected cost savings of more than \$700,000 from the three garrisons combined.

Two types of initiatives can be submitted, quality or performance initiatives and cost savings or avoidance initiatives.

"The two initiatives are designed to improve productivity, quality of life, better services that require less monetary or manpower resources," said Karen Acosta, director of the program for USAG Benelux's Plans, Automation and Integration Office. "During these fiscally challenging times when everyone is trying to do more with less, initiatives submitted from the workforce that improve processes allow us to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars."

Three Chièvres Garrison initiatives and one USAG Schinnen initiative received awards from the command for first quarter FY06 submissions - awardees received a certificate and one day off (or equivalent pass for service members).

Paul Davis and Sara Jennings from the Directorate of Logistics received an Excellence in Quality Improvement Award for their idea to contract the shuttle bus service serving the community routes between SHAPE, Chièvre Air Base and Caserne Daumerie.

The initiative would reduce over-

time costs and manpower hours required for the shuttle bus program that runs 24 hours a day Monday through Friday and limited services on weekends.

"Contracting services are projected to save the command money while improve the quality of service provided to the community," Acosta said.

Keith Nielsen submitted his idea to reorganize the

Directorate of

ing and adequate operation space were limited.

Nielsen's idea was to redesign existing and reclaim office space not currently being used in Building 318 on SHAPE to accommodate the staff. Using the Self-Help program and ACS labor, the offices were redesigned to accommodate the increase in staff while providing better privacy between counselor and customer.

"With Nielsen's reorganization efforts, ACS was able to take advantage of

vice to Brussels to twice a week (previously three times a week) saving the command more than \$3,600 annually.

"By reducing courier service, the mail room has expanded its hours for customer pickup and reduced operating costs," Acosta said.

According to Acosta, initiatives are generated via each garrison's Productivity Improvement Review work group. There is also training available to "prepare the workforce to become involved," she said.

The \$400,000 FY05 savings, with future reoccurring and projected savings approaching \$1 million for the fiscal year, "we are able to use our resources more wisely and improve the entire USAG Benelux community," Acosta said.

The Productivity Improvement Review is one step of the Benelux's Army Performance Improvement Criteria (APIC) and participate in Army Communities of Excellence - a program designed to provide, in a quality environment, excellent facilities and services.

Other initiatives submitted during the 1st Quarter of FY06 include the development of Chièvres Air Base picnic pavilion that could be used for community functions, reducing fork lift

operational costs, replace season landscaping requirements with longer-living plants, reduction of street sweeps by 60 percent to reduce disposal costs, and change the current process of disposing of wooded pallets by contracting with the Tournai Public Center of Social Assistance (center provides social assistance to those in need) where the center would provide all removal requirements in return for the pallets - a cost savings of more than \$5,000 annually.

Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Army Community Service office to provide better services to the community. His initiative was cited by the command for being mission enriching, vision enhancing and value creating.

With the addition of new ACS program staff to support family advocacy and sexual assault response coordinator programs and contractors for the Soldiers and family life consultant program, privacy for individual counsel-

space made available when the Red Cross closed its Benelux doors while providing better service to its customers," Acosta said. "Though the reorganization improves service, it also helps save the community money."

In Schinnen, Robert Bonaparte, Thomas Carroll and Donald Jamieson from the Directorate of Human Resources teamed together to submit an initiative to consolidate the unit and official mail rooms and reduce the mail courier ser-



ARMY COMMUNITIES OF EXCELLENCE

39th Sig. Bn. adds Army Superior Unit Award to colors

The 39th Signal Battalion added another streamer to its unit colors here, Jan. 31.

The battalion, who supports communications capabilities across the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux, received the Army Superior Unit Award for the period Oct. 1, 2002 to Sept. 30, 2003.

The original citation, submitted by former 39th Sig. Bn.'s Lt. Col. Jarvis McCurdy, highlighted the battalion's efforts to stand up a network service center on SHAPE, as well as its deployable communications package in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom while supporting port operations in Antwerp, Belgium.

The 39th previously received the Army Supply Excellence Award and the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence for the same period.

PHOTO: Courtesy 39th Signal Battalion

The 39th Signal Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Thomas J. Mahoney and Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin S. Schehl add the Army Superior Unit Award to the unit's colors.



Traffic laws follow Belgian Code on posts

Traffic laws on U.S. military installations in Belgium follow the host nation's "Code de la route."

The top speed on any installation is 50 kilometers per hour, with built-up areas limited to 30 kph and 15 kph speed limits in parking lots.

Violators of traffic and parking violations are assessed a respective point value and the accumulation of

12 points can result in a suspension of driving privileges.

On SHAPE, fines may be assessed for violations in addition to the points assessment. As an example, speeding is assessed two points for up to 10 kph over posted speed limits and an additional two points may be added for each additional 10 kph over the speed limit.

309th Airlift Squadron's

New commander takes over helm

By J.D. Hardesty

Lt. Col. Peter D. Giusti assumed command of the 309th Airlift Squadron from Lt. Col. Robert E. Jacobson Feb. 16 at Chièvres Air Base.

The 309th provides airlift support to the commander of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, including logistical, operational and communications management for flight operations.

"I wanted to thank the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux for their support as we stand together, working side-by-side - one team - to get the job done here at Chièvres Air Base."

Jacobson,

who logged 133 flights with over 450 hours in the air last year, led a squadron that excelled at its mission while supporting the Global War on Terrorism.

Giusti, a native of Colorado, was commissioned into the Air Force in 1988, earning his pilot wings in March 1990.

He is a command pilot with over 3,500 flying hours in the C-21, C-141 and C-20 aircraft.

Prior to taking command of the 309th, Giusti was assigned at the 76th Airlift Squadron at Ramstein Air Base, Germany as director of operations where he flew the C-20H and was responsible for distinguished visitor airlift operations for the U.S. Air Force Europe.



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Lt. Col. Peter D. Giusti
Commander, 309th Airlift Squadron

About the Meteor-Heraut

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- We encourage letters to the editor, but they must be signed. We will consider withholding the name of the author upon request. Letters regarding an issue should contribute to informational interest.
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Deadline

Copy and photographs are due by noon 11 calendar days before publication date.

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Meteor-Heraut Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy is due at noon

Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date
Feb. 27	Mar. 10	Mar. 27	Apr. 7	Apr. 24	May 5	May 22	June 2
Mar. 13	Mar. 24	Apr. 10	Apr. 21	May 8	May 19	June 5	June 16

**Chièvres Garrison...serving SHAPE/Chièvres communities****Community Notes****Local services**

Chièvres Air Base Recycling Center and the Post Office continue to offer services to the Chièvres Garrison community.

The Recycling Center is open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to noon and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Post Office operations, including buying postage and mailing boxes, is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Employment opportunities

Andrews Federal Credit Union has two full-time positions available. Applications may be picked up at the credit union.

The Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation has several positions open within the Chièvres Garrison community. Positions include bartenders, animal caretakers, recreation assistants, hotel workers, food service workers and several positions with Child and Youth Services programs. Applications may be filled out on-line at <http://www.chra.eur.army.mil/>.

Umpires Needed

The SHAPE Athletic Officials Association (SAOA) is seeking umpires for youth and unit sports programs.

The association provides training and is currently seeking umpires/referees for basketball, football, baseball, softball, volleyball, wrestling, and soccer in the Benelux.

"With job demands, deployments, and personnel moves, we are always looking for dependable umpires and referees," said Steve Richardson, president of SAOA. "Our goal is to have the SAOA game officials work together to improve their performance and produce the highest quality of officiating for the communities they support."

Officials are paid for each game, plus travel, if required outside of the community. Call 065-44-4405 or 065-361653 for more information.

Chièvres Air Base Gate 14 opens

Project completes garrison's force protection posture

Story and Photos by J.D. Hardesty

The Gate 14 project at Chièvres Air base opened for business Feb. 10, after a ribbon cutting ceremony marking the completion of Chièvres Garrison's force protection posture.

Air Force Tech Sgt. Robert S. Ramil joined Chièvres Garrison Commander Lt. Col. John G. Romero in cutting the ribbon as the garrison honored six 309th Airlift Squadron troops who returned from missions supporting contingency operations in Iraq and the United Arab Emirates.



Air Force Tech Sgt. Robert S. Ramil (right) joins Chièvres Garrison Commander Lt. Col. John G. Romero Feb. 10, to cut the ribbon opening Chièvres Air Base's Gate 14 - a \$1.5 million project that concludes more than two years of renovating all access to Caserne Daumerie and the air base in compliance with force protection measures.

The six fighterfighters were the first to travel through the gate that links the village of Chièvres with direct access to the air base.

The \$1.5 million gate renovations, with 75 percent of the work completed by local Belgian contractors, started at the end of 2004 and includes a covered area where trucks can be inspected.

"We have waited a long time," Romero said of the final force protection piece which provides a direct link between Caserne Daumerie

and the air base.

While thanking the Army Corps of Engineers, Directorate of Public Works, contractors and the "patience of those working to support USAG Benelux," Romero said, "Opening the gate protects our community and makes travel between the two installations more efficient."

The Gate 14 opening concludes more than two years of renovating all access gates to Caserne Daumerie and Chièvres Air Base in compliance with force protection measures.

Ramil, Staff Sgt. Jedediah Moss and senior airmen Nathan Ahl and Brown deployed as a rescue and firefighting team supporting Air Force missions in the United Arab Emirates while Staff Sgt. Julene Amerson and Tech. Sgt. Vickie Snow served in Iraq.



Six 309th Airlift Squadron troops who returned from missions supporting contingency operations in Iraq and the United Arab Emirates received the honor of going through the newly opened Gate 14 Feb. 10, on Chièvres Air Base.

Town Hall meeting

Commander addresses garrison concerns

By J.D. Hardesty

Bird flu and meningitis headlined the community's most important concerns at the Chièvres Garrison's Town Hall meeting Feb. 15, as reported cases of the Avian flu virus spread across NATO and European Union nations and three deaths of Americans in Germany reportedly caused by meningitis.

Hosted by Chièvres Garrison Commander, Lt. Col. John G. Romero, the town hall meeting is held quarterly to address the community's issues, some questions are immediately answered by garrison's staff, while other information is available on the USAG Benelux website.

"Some answers take research and analysis and follow-up on average can take two weeks," Romero said.

U.S. Army Garrison Benelux and Chièvres garrison staff, along with representatives from the SHAPE Healthcare Clinic, the Commissary, Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) and the credit union were on hand to respond to the public.

Recent cases of Avian flu and the highly pathogenic H5N1 virus have been reported across Europe. No human infections have been reported in Europe. Since 2003, more than 90 people have died

from bird flu in China, Turkey, Iraq and Southeast Asia.

With growing concern that Avian Influenza might evolve into a serious health threat, SHAPE Healthcare Facility Commander Col. Mark D. Menich, M.D., told the audience transmitting the virus from bird to human is rare.

"Nearly all of the human cases reported are due to people coming in contact with body fluids or faeces from infected fowl or poultry," Menich said.

Preventive measures Menich recommends include:

- ☐ Don't handle dead birds;
- ☐ Get a flu shot;
- ☐ Wash hands often;
- ☐ Stay away from sick people;
- ☐ If you're sick, stay away from work.

Addressing the three meningitis deaths in Germany, the commander of SHAPE Healthcare Facility explained that the bacterial virus is "not real contagious and is easily treated with antibiotics when caught early."

Meningitis is passed person to person and doesn't live long outside of the body.

"Young people coming together in college dorms or new recruits are those commonly acceptable," he said. "The Army has a good system of surveillance in place

and there have been no additional cases. I won't say it's not a problem and don't worry about it, but I'm not concerned.

"The key preventive measures are to diagnose quickly and to isolate patients," he said.

When asked about students or athletes travelling to Germany, Menich responded that if a student or athlete "has a high fever upon returning home, bring them to the healthcare facility as a precaution."

Symptoms of the disease, such as high fever, stiff neck and/or shoulders, headache, nausea, mental confusion or sleeplessness, typically develop two to 10 days after exposure.

Other issues addressed at the meeting included the new hotel and commissary construction plans, increasing bus service for college students returning for the summer, adding other eateries at the post exchange, the new motorcycle safety foundation course certificate requirement being implemented April 1, speeding on SHAPE, Caserne Daumerie and Chièvres Air Base and off post along Rue D'Ath (the road between Mons and Ath), and community employment opportunities at the Andrews Federal Credit Union and the Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

USAG Schinnen...serving the tri-border community

Combined Federal Campaign

Schinnen community receives honors

By LaDonna Davis

U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen and their supported commands were honored by the United States Europe Command and the Installation Management Agency-Europe for their contributions during the 2005 Combined Federal Campaign Overseas (CFC-O) in an awards ceremony held Feb. 9, in Heidelberg, Germany.

A total of \$46,836 was donated to the CFC from Schinnen and their supported commands during the 2005 campaign.

The CFC is part of the largest workplace giving campaign in the world which runs from Oct. 3 through Dec. 2 in the European theater. Contributors designated donations to a variety U.S.-based charities through CFC-O.

Schinnen was honored with two awards during the ceremony - the Bronze Award, which is given to units who contribute a \$60 average gift per potential contributor and/or 40 percent participation overall, and the Special Merit Award for "remarkable generosity, exceptional participation and extraordinary volunteer spirit" during the fall fundraising campaign when compared to the previous year's campaign.

"I'm very proud of our communities Combined Federal Campaign achievements," said USAG Schinnen Commander, Lt. Col. Richard Richardson. "This means we're the best in Europe."

The contributions of all of Schinnen's supported units contributed to the receiving of the Special Merits Award. Their contributions and awards are as follows:

□ AFNORTH Bn/Allied Rapid Reaction Corps - Platinum Award (\$200 per contributor and/or 85 percent participation)

□ 39th Signal Battalion - Platinum Award



PHOTO: Courtesy USAREUR/IMA-Euro

U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen Commander, Lt. Col. Richard Richardson (second from left) accepts the United States European Command Special Merit Award with USAG Schinnen Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Rusch presented by IMA-EURO Region Deputy Director, Col. E. Douglas Earl (left) and USAREUR, G-1, Brig. Gen. Russell L. Frutiger (far right).

□ 598th Transportation Group - Gold Award (\$110 per contributor and/or 60 percent participation)

□ Headquarters, Field Support Battalion-Eygelshoven - Gold Award

□ AFNORTH International School - Silver Award (\$90 per contributor and/or 50 percent participation)

USAREUR and IMA-EURO together contributed over \$3 million, an increase of more than \$120,000 from last year's campaign. The CFC 2005 campaign received donations from 40 percent of the total U.S. Army in Europe population.

Over half of the units participating in the campaign received awards. IMA-EURO received a total of 46 awards during the ceremony.

IMA-EURO Region Deputy Director, Col. E. Douglas Earle and USAREUR, G-1, Brig. Gen. Russell L. Frutiger hosted the ceremony and presented the awards to the winners.

Geilenkirchen bowler heads to U.S. Open

Air Force Staff Sergeant, claims championship

By LaDonna Davis

Air Force Staff Sgt. Kristin Elmore has always had a passion for bowling, but never expected that her passion would take her all the way to the U.S. Open Bowling Championship in Brunswick, N.J. where the best of the best in both amateur and professional bowling compete for chance to win a \$350,000 prize.

Though Elmore, a NATO surveillance officer at Geilenkirchen, seems to be on a lucky streak lately, her luck wasn't always so great. "I had to try out for the Air Force bowling team three times before I made it," she says.

And boy did the third time prove to be the charm for her.

Elmore competed in the 2006 U.S. Air Force Europe Bowling Championship and walked away as the top female USAFE bowler. As the top bowler, Elmore was then selected to go to Reno, Nev., to compete in the 2006 All Air



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Championship bowler, Air Force Staff Sgt. Kristin Elmore, won a spot in the U.S. Open Bowling Championship where she'll compete against some of the best bowlers in the country for a chance to win a jackpot grand prize.

Force Bowling Championship. It was there that Elmore got selected, along with five other top players, to play on

the Air Force team in the 2006 Armed Forces Bowling Championship. At that tournament, Elmore, along with her five other teammates went on to bowl 24 games over three days against some of the top bowlers in the world.

In the final game, Elmore beat out a woman from the Marine Corps and went on to win the gold medal for the team event, an honor the Air Force has taken for six years in a row, as well as taking first place for the women's singles event.

It was that honor that gave Elmore, along with the top male bowler from the Armed Forces Bowling Championship, an all expense paid trip from the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America (BPAA) to the 2006 U.S. Open Feb. 12-17, an event in which Elmore says she's excited but nervous about (results from the U.S. Open were not available at press time).

"I don't bowl that often, once a week, so I'm just hoping to score well," Elmore says.

See U.S. Open, Page 7

Employees share knowledge via mentorship

By LaDonna Davis

U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen has introduced a new mentorship program to help promote good work relations, increase professional development and give high ranking employees a chance to share their expertise and advice with their colleagues.

The mentorship program came about as a result of a strategic action plan and is meant as a means to develop, cultivate and retain an innovative, empowered workforce at Schinnen.

"We're looking for people who have a desire to better themselves," says Robert Bonaparte, action of-



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Thom Nunn, a plans officer at USAG Schinnen, sets a good example for the Schinnen workforce by volunteering to be a mentor to an up-and-coming Schinnen leader.

ficer for the Schinnen mentorship program.

Any Schinnen employee can apply if they want to be a mentor or if they want to be mentored.

When interested parties volunteer for the mentorship program, they can either be randomly matched up with a partner, or they can select their own partner. The only guidelines of the program are that the mentor be at least two grades higher than their protégé but not the protégé's supervisor.

"It's very important that we take an active interest in our younger leaders," said Thom Nunn, a plans officer at USAG Schinnen and a volunteer for the mentor program. "We need to do everything that we can to develop these young leaders so they can reach their full potential."

The mentor program was developed to produce results for both the mentor and the protégé, says Bonaparte. "For the mentor, they get

See Mentorship, Page 7

**USAG Brussels...serving the tri-mission community**

Brussels Soldier goes distance with eArmyU

By Ela Karczewska

When eArmyU came to Fort Campbell, Ky., in 2001, Sgt. Gornayl Beliard did not hesitate to sign up immediately.

Going back to college had been on his mind for some time. Before joining the Army, Beliard had attended college for almost two years. During that time, he held two jobs and took out college loans.

Overwhelmed with work and debts, he joined the service. Neither his academic advisor nor his family thought this was a good decision at the time.

Now, thanks to the Army's eArmyU program, Beliard has completed his associate's degree from Brussels.

Launched by the Army in 2001, eArmyU brings together 28 colleges and universities to offer a broad range of educational opportunities. The program also offers unique flexibility to Soldiers. Web-based courses can be completed anytime and anywhere, allowing Soldiers to study at times that are most convenient for them - wherever they are stationed.

Providing Soldiers tools they need, eArmyU enables Soldiers to succeed in the on-line environment. Once enrolled, Soldiers receive up to 100 percent funding for tuition, books and course fees, as well as a personal laptop, e-mail account and an Internet Service Provider (ISP) account. In addition to 24-hour technical support, eArmyU provides Soldiers with assistance in determining a program of study, registering for courses and transferring credits.

After receiving his eArmyU laptop, Beliard, an Army information specialist currently assigned to the staff of the U.S. Military Representative to NATO, enthusiastically signed up for his first on-line class only to have to withdraw from it soon afterward, when he



Sgt. Gornayl Beliard, an Army information specialist assigned to the staff at U.S. Military Representative to NATO, takes his final exam for an eArmyU class at the Brussels Army Education Center. Beliard recently finished his Associate of Arts degree from Anne Arundel Community College through the Army's education program which began in 2001.

came up on deployment orders.

When he returned from deployment, he enrolled in another class. Again, in the middle of the class, he received deployment orders and had to withdraw from the class.

Eventually, after being in the program for almost two years, he was able to take and finish several classes, selecting Anne Arundel Community College as his home college. He transferred all 45 credits he had earned prior to active duty and put them toward his new associates degree in business. His instruc-

tors at Anne Arundel were extraordinary, he states. They worked with him for several weeks while he was away on a mission and were willing to give him make-up exams; they answered questions and organized "live sessions" to discuss class issues.

The support Beliard received from his eArmyU mentor kept him focused on his goal. He speaks very highly of one mentor in particular, Chuck Eagle.

Eagle called or emailed Beliard often, intervening when there were problems signing up for classes, assisting with getting waivers, providing information, and offering step-by-step help, when needed. "Incredible" is the word that Beliard uses when talking about Eagle. Advising Beliard to transfer credits to a community college in order to achieve a short term goal in a timely manner.

Beliard's current goal is to earn a four-year degree before he leaves the service in a couple of years. He has transferred to the University of Maryland University College to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in business management. Speaking with Beliard after he finished a three-hour final exam for a business law class at the Brussels Education Center, he said, "Motivation and discipline are needed to succeed in this program. It's not a pushover. But without this program, I don't know how I could have gotten my degree."

Beliard plans to work for the government after he leaves active duty; his Army time and his college degree will be excellent "resume builders."

"It was all worth it," he says, "I will only be a couple years behind my peers when it comes to earning a college degree but my service in the Army, traveling all around the world, saving lives, and serving my country, are experiences that are unmatched."

Budding Brussels author helps fight breast cancer battle

By Thad Moyseowicz

Kristi Ahlers recently achieved that critical "first step" in any budding author's dream- to be published. Her short story, "The Trouble With French Kisses," appeared in the anthology *No Law Against Love* last month.

The anthology is a collection of short stories from 18 different authors. Each story takes its title from an actual law that is "on the books" somewhere in the world. In the case of her short story, Ahlers says that it's inspired by a French law making it illegal to publicly kiss on French railroads. All proceeds from the book (now in its second printing) go to benefit breast cancer research.

For Ahlers, the mother of two teenage boys and the wife of Air Force Tech Sgt. Brian Ahlers, serving at NATO headquarters in Brussels, the road to becoming a published author has been a long, but rewarding one. And her trip down that road is not over.

Ahlers explains the trip to becoming a writer came via reading. "When I was 14," she says, "Our family took a summer vacation. I picked up a copy of *Gone With the Wind*, read it cover-to-cover, and became 'hooked' on reading." She became a self-described "voracious" reader, with a particular love for history. She parlayed her interest in reading history into an associate's degree specializing in the renovation of historical landmarks. It was there, too, she met and married her husband. Brian's subsequent enlistment in the Air Force and her decision to follow him meant



Kristi Ahlers

that she had to put on temporary hold any serious work in her major. The Air Force took the Ahlers couple to the United Kingdom in 1999 for a three-year tour. She continued reading, with the added advantage that she was now living in a country that literally "dripped" history. Ahlers became interested in the creative aspects of books and came to the realization that writing might be something she could do. She resolved to learn the business from the ground-up.

Ahlers explains that "writing clubs" are a far more common phenomenon in the U.S. than in the U.K. Not unlike many great writers, she began her writing career by becoming a critic. She was aided by the Amazon on-line bookseller concern, which allows readers to post their own reviews of books. Ahlers, who at present has nearly 900 reviews within the Amazon "system," found the reviewing process a stimulating, great self-teaching experience. "Readers of the reviews post critiques of the reviews they read, and I learned (and still learn) enormously from their feedback," she says.

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She also began her first foray into writing fiction while in the UK. Her genre of interest is that of "Romance" novels, with a sub-specialization in historical fiction. Her first novel is set in mid-19th Century India, during the Sepoy Mutiny that consolidated British rule over the sub-continent. "I was just getting my feet wet," she explains, when her husband received orders to Brussels and NATO. "This turned out to be a real blessing," she says. She attended a writers' conference being held in Germany and made invaluable contacts.

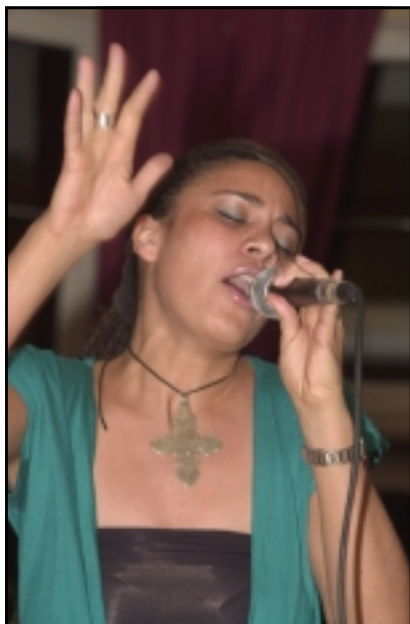
"I became part of a writers' network that has allowed me to send my manuscript to other writers and obtain criticisms from a fraternity of other like-minded writers interested in each other's success," she says.

Ahlers says her writers circle has expanded her network into contact with publishers.

It was through her now-expansive network Ahlers learned Highland Press, a new publishing house, was seeking short stories under the thematic umbrella of "silly laws." The publisher had just been given a clean bill of health as a breast cancer survivor, and had decided to publish an anthology with proceeds being donated to breast cancer research. Brian's mother had battled breast cancer, so Ahlers decided to go for it.

"My short story, 'The Trouble With French Kisses,' is set in Paris, a city I love," says Ahlers. "Living in nearby Brussels has allowed me to visit Paris over 10 times."

See Author, Page 7

**Luna Angel***2006 European Military Base Tour***Moese Angel***2006 European Military Base Tour*

Black History Month

Troops hear Angels sing

Story and photos by J.D. Hardesty

Everyone listening felt the African rhythm and beat while listening to the Angels sing Feb. 16, at the Prime Time Lounge.

Luna Angel, a reggae band whose music dances across soulful jazz and blues genres, entertained a Chièvres audience, followed by a performance Feb. 17 for an international audience at SHAPE as part of the group's first Armed Forces Entertainment tour.

"We wanted to come over and thank those great troops who serve our country," said the 24-year-old powerful vocalist whose band carries her name.

With her debut album "Move with Me" hitting store shelves radio airwaves, she said the band "took time out of the studio to perform for the troops."

"We've received a lot of love from the audiences we perform for," said Luna's brother and co-vocalist Moese Angel, as he described the response the band has received during its 18-day, 2006 European military base tour that helped celebrate Black History Month for thousands of Americans stationed overseas.

The Angels' music is a blend of their French and Jamaican ancestry with Luna performing all of her own original material.

Luna closed the free concert locally co-sponsored by the Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation with her original authored song "African Land" carrying her multi-cultural, multi-octave message throughout a multi-ethnic, multi-colored standing ovation audience.

After performing three concerts in Belgium in three days, the band completed its four-country, 14-performance tour with three concerts in the United Kingdom.



Luna Angel and her West Coast-based band entertained Chièvres Garrison troops with a mixture of reggae, rhythm and blues, and jazz at the Prime Time Lounge on Caserne Daumerie.

Author *from page 7*

"I wrote it over a weekend," she says, and, because of time constraints, submitted the story directly to the publisher and was delighted to learn it was accepted. *No Law Against Love* is now in its second printing. Ahlers admits to being doubly delighted, both for the cause which the anthology benefits and

for having gotten her first "break" as a published author. She has revised her first novel, and has gotten encouraging feedback from a publisher. She is already working on a second historical novel set in 18th century Scotland during the Jacobite Rebellion.

Ahlers remains a busy mother and Brussels commu-

nity volunteer. She has worked as a teacher's aide and is active in the Brussels American School's "Reading Counts" program. Meanwhile, buoyed by her first publishing success, Ahlers continues to refine her art and hope for that first full-length book acceptance. And she continues to read.

Mentorship *from page 5*

personal satisfaction, sharpened management, leadership and interpersonal skills, expanded professional contacts, and a source of recognition," he says. "For the mentored employee, the program builds confidence and encourages

growth, provides a role model and sounding board, and a chance to gain a better understanding of the organization."

Though mentorship programs have always had a place in the Department of Defense, this is the first time one will be

at Schinnen.

By initiating a mentorship program, USAG Schinnen leadership hopes to structure an already existing program and bring it to the forefront at Schinnen.

Bonaparte says that just

about anyone can be mentored just as long as they express an interest in progressing and don't want to remain stagnant in their career.

As for the mentors, well, they're held to a high standard.

"We want our mentors to

have good moral judgment, good ethical standards, and someone who enforces the Army values," says Bonaparte. "The goal of the program is to attract and keep professional workforce within USAG Schinnen."

U.S. Open *from page 5*

Bowling since the age of five, as well as coming from a family of bowlers (her father has a place in the Greater Milwaukee Bowling Hall of Fame), it's safe to say that Elmore was born with the bowling gene.

"I grew up in a bowling alley," Elmore quips. "We would bowl and travel all over the U.S. That's what got me interested, just watching my father compete."

At the U.S. Open, Elmore will be up against approximately 480 of the United States top bowlers, some of whom have even competed in the Olympics. But only the top 25 percent will actually make it to the finals.

As for Elmore's chances, well, she's taking a modest approach. "I would like to hope I could bowl that well, but I'm not expecting it," she says.

But, in the end, Elmore says that she's just going to have a good time. "All of my family is going to be there cheering me on, they're super excited for me."

Even though Elmore will be competing with some of the top professionals in the world, she says that, for now, her job at NATO is her first priority. "I don't know if I have the time (to professionally bowl) with my job and flying, but, I'm definitely going to keep up bowling, that's for sure."

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